Iron County Register.

By ELI D. AKE.

IRONTON, : : : MISSOURI

PUSH AHEAD.

Is the path with shadows dim?
Push ahead.
Are there difficulties grim?
Push ahead.
Halt not for the hindrance met;
Halt not for some vain regret;
All the past, forgive, forget—
Push ahead.

Are there foes within—without?
Push ahead.
Do thy friends thy wisdom doubt?
Push ahead.
Falter not for anything;
Mount thy hope on fleetest wing;
Upward, forward go and sing—
Push ahead.

Be not heartless, selfish, proud—
Push ahead.
Room enough; then never crowd—
Push ahead.
Jostle not thy fellow-men;
Help the fallen rise again;
Speak a cheering word, and then
Push ahead.

Make thy purpose manifest—
Push ahead.
Seek to know and find the best.
Push ahead.
May thy guardian angels three—
Faith and Hope and Charity—
Ever cheer and strengthen thee.
Push ahead.

—Mrs. F. A. Breck, in Orange Judd Farmer.

JOAN OF ARC.

The Power of a Little Girl's Imagination.

FOURTEEN years of age, and fair as a lily, with silky, golden hair, expressive blue eyes and a charming face; kind and gentle in disposition, and with a refined simplicity of manners that indicated the superior character of her training and environment—such was the description of my cousin Dolores. Her parents, wishing to complete her education, had intrusted her to my care to be taken to a school in Paris.

We left Madrid by the Southern Express, and early in the afternoon of the second day, which was in January, it began to snow heavily. Dolores and I were seated at one of the small tables in the dining car, and were just beginning dinner, when the train stopped and we heard the call, "Orleans, five minutes stop."

"Orleans!" exclaimed she, covering her face with her hands.

"Yes, Orleans, the birthplace of Joan of Arc," said I.

"No," quickly replied Dolores, uncovering her pretty face, "Joan of Arc was not born here. She was a native of Domremy, and if she is known by the name of Maid of Orleans, it is because of her efforts to prevent this place from falling into the hands of the English."

"It seems that you remember perfectly the history of that remarkable woman."

"Remember it! Even to the slightest particulars."

After which my cousin remained pensive for some time, scarcely tasting the viands that were placed before her.

The train proceeded on its way and we were soon going at full speed, in spite of the snow that was falling on the track. Happening to notice two tears in the child's eyes, and supposing that thoughts of her parents were causing her sadness, I requested her, in order to divert her mind, to tell me the story of Joan of Arc.

She began the recital and showed a familiarity with the story extraordinary in one of her years. She seemed also to feel an incomprehensible agitation as she related the sufferings of the Maid of Orleans. When she reached the point where Joan of Arc was condemned to be burned alive she was too overcome to speak.

At that moment the locomotive whistled several times and the train began to reduce speed, soon stopping entirely. Wiping off with a napkin the frosty window of the car, I saw the railway guards signalling with red lanterns.

"What has happened?" I asked an employe.

"There's a small landslide on the track, but I think it will soon be cleared. We have two gangs at work now."

Dolores had not stopped weeping, and the condition of her mind was such that she was unconscious of having attracted the attention of the other passengers.

"Come," said I, wishing to put an end to this scene; and she followed me mechanically to our own compartment.

We installed ourselves there, and not wishing to add to her grief by reproof I sat down to look out of the window. An immense bonfire had been built, by the light of which workmen were engaged in clearing the road, and which projected their figures in grotesque, moving shadows upon the snowy winding sheet that covered the earth.

After looking a while at the fantastic picture before me, I called my cousin, who, rising to her feet and approaching the window, remained a short time silent and absorbed, looking at the flames with fixed and staring eyes. Then, as if taken with a sudden attack of insanity, she exclaimed:

"Look! there are my executioners—they lead me again to torture! And what torture! Oh, my God, to die by fire! The smoke suffocates me; the flames seize upon my garments; the heat burns me; I grind my teeth and bite my lips; my limbs writhe and twist, my body trembles, shrinks, and vainly struggles to be free!"

I was astonished and alarmed at hearing these words. Poor Dolores! Had she lost her reason? Was it a passing delusion, a momentary aberration—or a serious symptom of incurable insanity?

Hurriedly drawing down the curtain and taking the child in my arms, I laid her on the sofa, covered her with my traveling wrap and seated myself at her side, without taking my eyes from her face. She was as white as wax, and her staring, glassy eyes filled me with alarm.

They gradually closed, and she fell asleep; but her breathing was heavy and her slumber disturbed. After a while she awoke and, rubbing her eyes as if trying to overcome a nightmare, sat up, looked around and said to me:

"You cannot imagine the fright that the bonfire gave me."

"The bonfire!" I replied, "what was there frightful about that?"

"And who were the people that were moving around it?"

"The people? Only the poor workmen, who in spite of the cold weather, are hurrying to clear the track so that we may go on. They are suffering with cold and perhaps with hunger, while we, after a sumptuous dinner, can keep ourselves comfortable by these heaters. What compassion and even gratitude you should feel for these disinherited ones of fortune!"

"That is true! They do indeed move me to compassion and awaken my sympathy; but seeing them in the firelight confused me and disturbed my mind. Ah, you little know the scene, the terrible scene that they evoked in my memory!"

"A terrible scene? I have known you since your birth; your life has glided quietly and pleasantly along in the companionship of loving parents. No sad or tragic event has disturbed your happy existence."

"If you only knew! But no, I do not wish to tell you; I have revealed it to no one; I do not know why, but I am ashamed—"

"Ashamed? Of what have you to accuse yourself?"

"Of nothing; the fault is not mine, but that of my destiny."

"Your destiny! It is with this word that we pretend to justify all our faults."

"I mean that I have committed none."

"Of what, then, do you accuse your destiny?"

"Very well, I will tell you. I am going to make a confession to you—to you alone. I have always loved you as if you were my brother, and I know that you will appreciate the sincerity of my words without making them the subject of jest."

"Go on."

"You must know that I suspect—why do I say 'suspect?' I believe firmly that I have existed before in this world and that my soul once belonged to another woman."

"What madness!"

"Madness? No, it is a profound conviction."

"But to believe this is a sin!"

"If it be a sin, I cannot help committing it, for, in spite of me, and against my will, I preserve indelibly the remembrance of my previous existence."

"Wild delusion!"

"Not at all! On arriving at Orleans the remembrance of my former life came vividly back to my mind. I remembered my good parents, sad, alone and abandoned in their miserable home; while I, a weak woman, guided by divine inspiration and encountering dangers without number, combated the enemies of my country.

"And later, when in sight of the bonfire, my imagination recalled the tragedy of Rouen, the memory of which freezes my blood and sets my hair on end.

"Bound to the dreadful stake, the butt of the jeering, scoffing multitude that filled the place of execution, I saw at my feet the sinister light of the fire; I heard the snapping and crackling of the wood as it mounted the pile; I saw the increasing flames stirred up with fiendish eagerness by my cruel executioners; they reached me, they enveloped me, and I felt the supreme agony of the moment, when, my torture having been completed, my soul was freed from my suffering body.

"Never can I forget the frightful memory of my former life! There is no doubt of it—I was Joan of Arc."

We arrived at Paris at one o'clock the following morning, four hours late. Our aunt, Senora de Alvarez, who had not seen Dolores since she left that city at the age of five years, was anxiously waiting for us at the station.

She offered us the hospitality of her house, which I gladly accepted, as, since the scene on the train, the condition of the child had caused me the greatest alarm and required the care of some member of the family.

We settled ourselves, therefore, at our aunt's house, where rooms had already been prepared for us. Dolores, exhausted with the fatigue of the journey, went immediately to bed, and I retired to my own apartment.

In spite of the natural weariness caused by 34 hours of railway travel, I arose early and gave my aunt an account of the strange mental disturbance from which Dolores was suffering, and at which the good woman was in no small degree surprised. I remembered that one of my friends, a Spanish physician, was at that time in Paris, and I went to find him at the hospital where he was perfecting his studies on diseases of the nerve centres, for the cure of which he was a specialist.

I had the good fortune to find him and to secure his immediate attendance upon my cousin. She was still asleep when the doctor and I arrived at the house.

"Do you wish me to wake her up?" inquired my aunt of the doctor, while inviting us to seats in the salon.

"No, senora," said the doctor. "Permit me first to make some inquiries of you. This gentleman has told me of the occurrence on the train, and I now desire to know other facts necessary to the diagnosis. How old is Dolores?"

"Fourteen years," replied my aunt.

"Has any other person in the family suffered from nervous disorders?"

"No one," said I.

"And you, senora—you have known the child from infancy?"

"She was born in Paris, in this very house, and I was like a second mother to her until she was taken by her parents, at the age of five years, to live in Madrid."

"Did you notice anything extraordinary about her while she was with you?"

"Yes; vividness of imagination and fineness of sensibility. She had a perfect passion for the marvellous, but, as this is so common in children, I attached no importance to it."

"And you," said he, addressing himself to me, "have you observed during her stay in Madrid any unnatural excitement, delusions, monomania, or anything else strange in her conduct?"

"None whatever; but she has shown a thoughtful and serious tendency unnatural to one of her years."

"And what does she most enjoy?"

"Reading, in the first place. She knows the history of France, especially at the time of Charles VII. She also knows to the smallest detail the life of Joan of Arc."

"When she was a mere baby," added Senora de Alvarez, "Joan of Arc was her favorite heroine; she often asked me to relate that story to her."

"Can you remember when this predilection for the celebrated Maid of Orleans began?"

"No, senor."

"Did she see her adventures at the theater?"

"She was never at the theater while in Paris."

The doctor remained buried in thought for a moment, and then, mechanically fixing his gaze on a picture hanging on the wall of the salon, said:

"Did you not say that Dolores lived in this house during her first five years?"

"Yes."

"Did you own that picture at the time?"

"Yes, and in fact it hung opposite her bed."

"Here, then," exclaimed the doctor, "we have the corpus delicti," and with this he rose to look more closely at the picture.

It was a colored lithograph—a copy of the painting by Eugenio Deveria in the Antwerp museum—representing the execution of Joan of Arc. The heroine is depicted as standing on the burning pile, the fire of which is being fed by the executioners, while a priest holds before her a crucifix.

"Corpus delicti," repeated the doctor, looking attentively at the picture. "Senora," said he to my aunt, "you may now awaken Dolores and prepare her to be seen at once." And my aunt left us alone together.

"How do you explain the origin of this hallucination, doctor?"

"Very easily; the child was a peculiar subject; she frequently saw this picture and finished by identifying herself with the principal figure. We have here a case of auto-suggestion."

Senora de Alvarez soon announced that Dolores was ready to receive us. We entered her room, and the doctor with much kindness and tenderness avoiding all allusion to the scene on the train and to her peculiar hallucination, submitted to her a series of questions. He felt her pulse, examined her, and concluded by saying that she had only a slight indisposition.

"I will write a prescription," he added, going toward the door; and then, turning around suddenly and fastening his eyes, which appeared to leap from their sockets, upon those of the young girl, he looked at her until the rigidity of her limbs, the expression of her face and the immovability of her eyes, which stood still as if under a mysterious charm, indicated that she was hypnotized. I was alarmed and my aunt was terrorized by the impressive scene.

"You believe that you were once Joan of Arc—is it not so?" inquired the doctor, without taking his eyes from her face.

"Yes, sir," replied Dolores, in a weak and submissive voice.

"Then, in order to convince you that you are in error, I command you to preserve in your mind the cause of that error. Upon waking from this hypnotic sleep, you will go into the salon, where you will find a certain picture by which a memory of your infancy will be recalled to mind, and you will realize the exact truth in the case.

"I command you, with all my controlling power, to detest, abominate and execrate the false doctrine of the transmigration of souls; and to convince yourself that the illusions of your brain regarding a previous existence are the results of impressions received by you in the first dawning of your faint mind."

The doctor then ordered my cousin to preserve permanently the remembrance of her state of consciousness during this induced sleep, after which he awakened her.

Dolores rubbed her eyes and looked all around the room, scarcely noticing those who were present. Suddenly she rose, and, passing with a firm, determined step into the adjoining salon she stopped before the picture of Joan of Arc and said:

"Ah, this picture used to hang opposite my bed when I was a little girl here in Paris! How plainly I remember it! How mistaken I was, for I imagined that I was Joan of Arc before I was born. I had forgotten the picture, but identified myself with the character, and the vague and confused remembrances lurking in my mind led me to believe in a previous existence, although life, as we understand it, includes only the present and future state. Perdoname, Dios mio! I was insane. But the picture seems to me now much smaller."

"It is because you have grown, while it has remained the same," said the doctor; "things appear much smaller with the lapse of years."—From the Spanish of Nilo Maria Fabra, in N. Y. Sun.

A Record Moose.

Probably the largest moose ever killed was shot in Alaska last summer by Lord Alphinstone and party in the Kenai peninsula. This moose weighed 1,576 pounds and measured seven and one-half feet to the top of his shoulders. The skull and horns weighed 75 pounds, but the spread of the antlers is not known definitely. The next largest moose on the coast is one in the Parliament building at Victoria, B. C., which measures seven feet three inches in height. The party are very well satisfied with their hunt, and brought out quite a number of trophies, which they prize very highly. The English party was beaten to Seldovia by Baron Paul Neidick, who paid the agent of the steamer Nome City $1,500 to be landed at Seldovia, where he could secure the services of John Gilpatrick ahead of the English party. He won the race to the north but the Alphinstone party got the game.—Field and Stream.

A Sure Sign.

"Well, I guess old Slyman is beginning to make his pile."

"Why do you think so?"

"He's going around blowing about how much happier a man is when he's poor."—Philadelphia Press.

ONE CENT APPROPRIATION.

Incident Which Shows the Government's Watchfulness Over the Little Things.

One item in the urgent deficiency bill which has neither been reduced by the economists of the house nor increased by the more liberal senators is found on the seventeenth line of page 80 in the printed bill: "For contingent, bureau of medicine and surgery, one cent."

Only the bare statement is there contained, but a search of the records reveals the history of this item, one of the smallest, beyond doubt, to which a paragraph of a public bill was ever devoted, says the New York Post. In May, of 1901, the Southern Pacific railroad carried some goods by freight for the bureau presided over by the surgeon-general. For this is charged $5.29. As it was a bond-aided road, however, its relations with the government were such that it was not entitled to cash payment. Only a fraction of one per cent. of the bills of such a road are paid in cash, the remainder being credited to its account in the treasury. It so happened that in this case the credit was $5.28 and the cash one cent. Together with a number of other freight bills of various bureaus aggregating several thousand dollars, the account passed the auditor for the navy department. On the discovery that there were no contingent funds available from which the cash payment could be made, the secretary of the treasury transmitted the separate items to the house of representatives among his estimates.

Curiously enough, another government obligation of a single cent has also recently passed through the hands of the auditor of the navy department. The course which it followed shows anew that the government is just as careful when its transactions are on the scale of the small boy in a candy store as when it is buying canal zones. On April 1, 1903, Pay Director I. G. Hobbs made a requisition for a large quantity of ethyl ether, to be used in the manufacture of smokeless powder. A chemical company of Hoboken, for reasons which do not appear in the papers, made a singularly generous offer of 16,892 pounds for one cent. Two days later Pay Director Hobbs solemnly made this entry: "I certify that after public competition I purchased the above article at the prices above charged, amounting in all to one cent." To this transaction the paymaster general gave his approval by fixing his signature. An officer of the navy certified in turn that he inspected the ether and found it to conform with the specifications. The general storekeeper at Newport signed his name to a certificate that the ether was received. The commandant of the naval station approved this by signing his name. Admiral O'Neil, chief of the bureau of ordnance, wrote his name across the papers, thus adding his assurance that the government was not being cheated. In all there were nine signatures on the papers relating merely to the establishment of the claim. These included the signs-manual of two bureau chiefs, one of them a rear admiral.

The paper, which finally reaches the treasurer's office, where the warrant for payment is drawn, bears merely the full signature of the deputy auditor and five sets of initials, those of the clerks the claim was successively "audited by," "revised by," "entered by," "scheduled by" and "indexed by." What such a miniature autograph album costs the government would be an interesting calculation.

President Cleveland, a few days after he turned his office over to his successor, received a warrant for one cent. The president is paid 12 times a year, his monthly salary being $4,166.66 2-3. To bring the total out even, his warrant, after the decimal point, is sometimes made out for 66 and sometimes 67 cents. On the final month of Mr. Cleveland's term he should have had the odd cent, but in the desire to get the account settled promptly, the treasury department made out a warrant for the same sum as the previous month. Thus, out of the $200,000 to which the president is entitled during his term, one cent was left in the treasury, and to square the account had to be sent to him on a special warrant. It is said that he never cashed it, but retained it as a curiosity.

Nerve-Timing.

A curious instance of the care and minuteness with which the human body is now studied, in the effort better to understand its powers and functions, is furnished by a paper read recently at a meeting of the Royal society in London on the "Rapidity of the Nervous Impulse in Tall and Short Individuals." Even the difference in time required for a "nerve telegram" to traverse the bodies of different people is regarded as a matter of scientific importance. A series of observations has shown that the length of the nerves does not affect the velocity with which an impulse passes between the brain and the extremities, and consequently that more time is needed if the path is long than if it is short. It follows that a short man should feel a step on his corns quicker than a tall man, but the difference is so slight that the offender has no better chance of escape in one case than in the other.

His Little Joke.

"Yes," said the young man, "I removed the dial from that grandfather's clock which has stood in our house for a century."

"It is a wonder that the noble old timepiece didn't protest," spoke up the emotional girl.

"It didn't have the face."—Chicago Daily News.

No Overtime.

"Does your wife talk in her sleep?"

"She doesn't need to."

"Doesn't need to?"

"No; she says all there is to be said while she is awake."—Houston Post.

Chromic Iron Ore.

An extensive and rich deposit of chromic iron ore has been found on the coast of Cuba, 30 miles from Baracoa. It aggregates from eight to twelve feet in thickness.

Exports to Italy.

The United States has the lead as exporters to Italy of cotton oil, heavy mineral oil, petroleum and solid paraffin, and the same might be said for tobacco

The Pond Frog.

The common pond frog's natural lifetime is from 12 to 15 years

UP-TO-DATE LIBRARIES.

Books May Now Be Ordered to Harmonize with Surroundings in Sections and Covers.

The truly modern and really up-to-date book store of this generation is one of the best examples of the desire to cater to the public taste, says Percy Douglas, in the Reader.

Our grandfathers read and were compelled nolens volens to use large, cumbersome volumes. These suited some people, but others rebelled. Then our fathers thought they had solved the problem by printing nice little editions on India paper, thus giving the much sought for small book with large print. These volumes were in some ways delightful—small, neat, easily carried in the pocket, light to handle and a relief to the eyes; in fact, a vast improvement on the productions of the early nineteenth century. But looking back we can see what crude makeshifts they were after all.

How was the man who wanted an imposing library (which he did not use) to make it out of small books? How was my lady to harmonize the color of her book bindings with each change of decorative scheme? Then, again, if one did not like certain chapters in a book, how in the world was one to be rid of them? The modern idea of sectional volumes, with extra wide margins and movable, reversible covers, never seems to have dawned upon them.

With these steps in advance one can in this day satisfy every variation in taste, every caprice and whim. The man who likes small volumes has his bookseller cut off the unnecessary margins, slip on a flexible leather cover, stamp the title on back and side and the book is completed while he waits.

The man who has the most beautiful library mostly for exhibition purposes leaves the extra wide margins, has a full leather case of his fancy's color put on, elaborate tooling done by machinery, his crest stamped in bold relief and the imposing volume is ready for its place on the shelf.

Should my lady think the shade of the binding on the set of Mr. Dooley's complete works does not harmonize with the new draperies, then the covers are easily detached, appropriate ones substituted and—Mr. Dooley's done.

But even these improvements, great as they are, are insignificant compared with the truly modern idea of books in sections. In our advanced civilization it is almost too much to expect an author to write a whole volume which will suit the taste of the purchaser. Then why should we be burdened with chapters we do not like? Certainly not. The enterprising book seller will cheerfully take out the undesirable sections and substitute any others of your choosing either from the same author or some other. By this beautiful device each book buyer can be his own editor.

RUSSIA'S REAL WEAKNESS.

Exhaustion of the Soil the Cause of Much Suffering Among the Peasantry.

In consequence of the terrible and frequent famines which of late have devastated Russia a commission was appointed in the spring of 1899 to inquire into the economic decay of the central governments of European Russia, writes O. Eltzbacher, in Nineteenth Century.

One of its members, Mr. A. D. Poljenow, has recently published some results of that inquiry, from which it appears that the quantity of grain sown per head of population decreased by 35 per cent. between 1861-1865 and 1891-1896. We are told "the Russian peasant living in these governments suffered chronically from insufficiency of food, and the terrible consequences are already apparent to a pronounced degree." How greatly exhausted the soil has become is evident from the fact that, according to the commission, the ground yields now 27 per cent. less than it did 30 years ago.

The impoverishment of the population has been so great that, in spite of the great increase of the numbers of peasants, the number of horses has decreased by 48 per cent. between 1868 and 1895. And so many horses have died of famine many peasants have taken their wives and children into the plow.

Notwithstanding the frightful and habitual dearth of the most necessary food, more than half of Russia's exports always consists of corn, flour and meal. These exports of food represent a money value of from £30,000,000 to £40,000,000 a year. If the Russian population were properly nourished Russia could not export any grain, but would have to import. But the peasant cannot always afford to eat his own grain. Immediately after the harvest the government gathers the taxes, and many taxpayers are left to starve after the harvest is over. Their food has been collected by the government in the form of taxes, and is sent out of the country in order to pay interest on the huge foreign loans which have been contracted by the government for the furtherance of Russia's expansionist policy. Thus Russia's enormous army and navy, her strategical railways and harbors, her loans to China and Persia, her secret service, her shipping subsidies and her export bounties are paid for with the food of the peasants, and if the peasants were allowed to eat their own food Russia would speedily be bankrupt.

Over-Conservative.

One thing is lacking in Italy, especially in the south, and that is individual initiative. Capital is plentiful, but the Italian is, as a rule, very conservative, thrifty and saving. It is figured that many millions are hoarded away by thousands who prefer to lose the interest on their money rather than to intrust it to banking institutions, not to speak of investing it in industrial enterprises

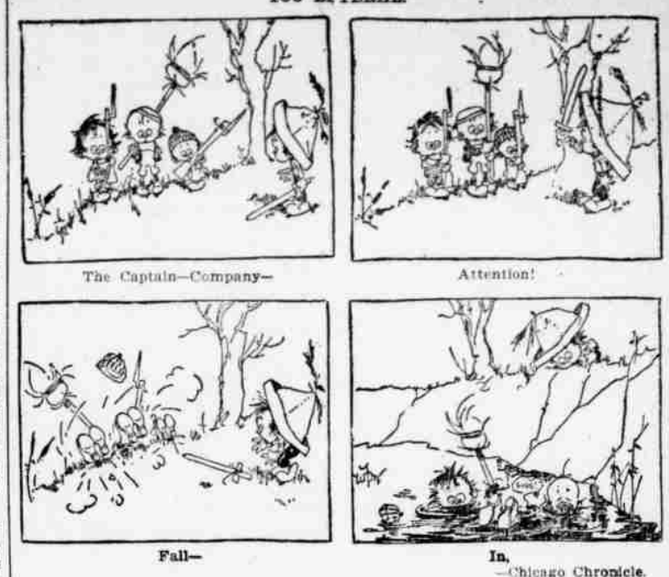
Argon.

When air is passed over red-hot quicklime and magnesium, then over red-hot metallic calcium, the oxygen, nitrogen and hydrogen are absorbed, leaving argon. Moissan has found that the proportion of argon varies from 0.9325 (in London) to 0.9492 (over the Atlantic ocean).

First Electric Railway.

The first electric railway for public use in America was that of the East Cleveland Street Railway company, which was equipped in 1884. The conductors were laid underground.

TOO LITERAL.



The Captain—Company—

Attention!

Fall—

In.

—Chicago Chronicle.

STRUCTURE OF THE CELLS.

It Has Taken Nature a Long Time to Perfect Her Plan Regarding Them.

In a recent address before the Secular league, of Washington, Hyland C. Kirk discussed the subject of "Cells and Cell Structure," saying in the course of his address:

"It has taken nature a very long period to develop man as he is. Paleontology informs us that the age of fishes, of primary period, extended through some 24,000,000 years; the age of reptiles, or secondary period, covered some 11,000,000 years; while the mammalian, of tertiary period, extending up to man, was some 3,000,000 years; so that each one of us can boast of an ancestry running back to the earliest cell of some 48,000,000 years. In this view the few whirls about the sun that a man lives would hardly seem to compensate nature for her trouble. If one lives to be 100 years he has attained 1-480,000 part of the time that it has taken nature to produce him. If man as he is is the highest thing aimed at, why has nature gone to so much trouble to produce so ephemeral a creature?

"The cell, as the unit of structure in the organism, is a long way from being understood. The biological chemist, the histologist, the embryologist, the pathologist, the moralist and the philosopher have each a field here for work. It is not impossible that a knowledge of this simple unit, usually invisible to the eye, yet that links each one of us, not only with royal families and greatest of the earth, but with every animal and plant that exists or has existed—it is not impossible that its practical comprehension may result in a great and enduring benefit to man. For the vibrations and motions of the cell, which probably determine the character of each individual developed from the embryo, operate in the ether of space which binds the visible universe together, suggesting, through the processes it reveals, much higher results."

WHEAT SUPERSEDING RICE.

The American Grain Taking the Place of the Popular Food Product in Japan.

A strong point made by the flour mill magnates of the west is that, when any considerable number of the millions of China shall call for flour, the entire wheat-growing area of the world will not be sufficient to supply the demand. "Even if all Japan should become a flour-eating people," he said, "the whole available supply of the Pacific coast would provide this commodity for only 20 per cent. of the population of that kingdom." There is likelihood, too, says Harold Bolee, in Booklovers Magazine, that a greater portion of the inhabitants of Japan will acquire the habit of using flour. It was represented to the mikado by his ablest advisers that, in modeling the Japanese army on the latest military standard of the modern powers, the important matter of diet had been overlooked. Not only had all modern nations a standing army, but the food of these formidable hosts consisted in a great measure of wheat products. Rice-eating regiments, it was feared, might not be able successfully to contend with a foe whose sinews were built up of wheat. Japan, to be up-to-date, must maintain not only a big, well equipped and well drilled military force, but its soldiers, like the men of arms of other lands, must eat flour. So an imperial edict went forth recently; and now every soldier in the armies of Japan gets a daily ration of Oregon, Washington and California flour. This ukase of the emperor will mark the beginning of a very important chapter in commercial history, for this mandate on the part of the mikado has already greatly stimulated the demand in the kingdom for wheat products, the people being alert to keep abreast of whatever is decided to be progress along modern lines.

Japanese Prayer Wheels.

Praying in Japan is made very easy. In the streets are tall posts with prayers printed on them, and with a small wheel attached. Anyone passing by can give the wheel a turn and that counts as a prayer. The Ainus, residing in Yezo, the second largest of the 3,850 islands of which the empire is composed, worship the bear and reverence the sun, moon, fire, wind and water.

Sure.

Bacon—Do you ever answer fool questions?

Egbert—Yes; what do you want to know?—Yonkers Statesman.

Horses in Paris.

A census recently taken of the horses in Paris shows that while the Palais Royal quarter has 13,600 inhabitants, it accommodates 30,600 horses.

Mistaken.

"Some men," said Uncle Eben, "thinks dey is makin' haste when dey ain' makin' nuffin' but trouble."—Washington Star.

Man's Superiority Over Animals.

According to the best authorities there has never been a race of men who were ignorant of fire.

INTERNAL REVENUE STAMPS

Some That Have Been Too Costly for Collectors to Buy—Most Valuable Collection.

The United States internal revenue stamp is an object that the million and one stamp collectors in this country and Europe have ever looked upon with covetous eyes and pursued with vain endeavor. The adhesive war revenue stamps issued during the civil war and the Spanish war were, of course, sold to all comers, and the stamp collector loaded up on all the denominations that came within the limits of his purse, says the Philadelphia Ledger.

But the large $500 stamp of the civil war and the $1,000 issue of recent years were just a trifle too fancy for the most enthusiastic collector. When the war taxes were repealed a couple of years ago, and some 400 tons of surplus stamps were to be called in and destroyed, there was a rush upon the bureau by philatelists, who believed they could get some of the big fellows at bargain counter prices, but much to their chagrin they discovered that even the day after the stamps became obsolete, the $1,000 stamp was still selling for $1,000, and could not be bought then except upon satisfactory proof that it was needed to validate some document which should have been stamped when the law was in force.

The stamp collector can, of course, get possession of canceled adhesive stamps and display them along with his other treasures, but your real philatelist always wants a stamp that has never felt the stab of the canceling machine, and hence his ceaseless pursuit of the genuine article. Still, the canceled stamps of old issues are highly prized by philatelists and many a pretty penny has been turned by shrewd persons, who robbed old and worthless documents of their revenue stamps.

The most valuable collection of obsolete stamps in the world hangs in the corridor in the treasury building near the office of the commissioner of internal revenue. These stamps were assembled in an artistic manner for the government exhibit at the Centennial exposition in 1876, and comprise all the obsolete issues then in existence, ranging in value from 1 cent to $5,000.

The collection is handsomely mounted and is in a gilt frame about 6x9 feet. It was exhibited at subsequent expositions, but permission to take the collection to Buffalo was refused, and it will probably not be allowed to leave the treasury building again. Owners of famous collections who have viewed this display say that at current rates it would sell for $250,000.

As to the other classes of internal revenue stamps—those used by manufacturers of tobacco and cigars, distillers and brewers—here again does the law block the desire of the stamp collector by providing that such stamps shall be sold only to those entitled to use them commercially.

Musicale East of Suez.

On Sunday afternoon at four p. m., says the Perak Straits Echo, a Chinese lunch was given by Mrs. Chia Boon Teat, in honor of the departure of Mr. Law Yew Swee to Tongkah and Mr. Tan Koon Yong's recent appointment as superintendent over the property of Mr. Low Boon Tit at Mrs. Ah Yoke's country house. After lunch the services of three Cantonese singing girls were engaged; the performance of the three Chinese girls, a Malay pianist, a Mohammedan organist, who played the harmonium with exquisite taste, was much appreciated by all present, while the usual Malay rong-geng party was also in attendance. This sort of function comprising such cosmopolitan music was never before essayed by anyone and Mrs. Chia Boon Teat has scored a success. The party dispersed at midnight, highly pleased with the services of the musicians and themselves.

Taking No Chances.

Effie (just engaged)—What do you think Edwin said last night? That if he had to choose either me or $1,000, he wouldn't even look at the money.

May (still waiting)—Dear, loyal fellow! I suppose he wouldn't like to risk the temptation.—Stray Stories

Locating His Man Easily.

Patron—I'll have a piece of pumpkin pie.

Waiter—Punkin pie. Yes, sir.

"Pump-kin pie."

"Oh, yes, sir. Think the Boston club will have any chance o' winnin' the pennant this year?"—Philadelphia Ledger.

Worthless as Food.

The chemical committee of the British Royal Agricultural society investigated some new "food" stuff which purported to be rice meal, and was sold at the rate of $20.60 a ton, and found it to consist of the ground-up husks of the rice grain, and not worth $2.50 a ton.

Iron for the Blood.

Iron is a food to all anaemic persons and must not be regarded by them as a medicine only to be taken temporarily, for in most cases it is necessary to persevere in taking iron for a period varying from two months to five or six years.